

PROGRESS IN MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY—Volume 1— Edited by G. P. Ellis, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.I.C., Research Department, Benger Laboratories Limited, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire; and G. B. West, B. Pharm., D.Sc., Ph.D., School of Pharmacy, University of London. Butterworth, Inc., 7235 Wisconsin Avenue, Washington 14, D. C., 1961. 262 pages, \$11.25.

The topics covered in this review are Pharmacological Screening Tests, Hypotensive Agents, Tranquillizers, Diuretic Drugs, Oral Hypoglycemic Drugs and Antifungal Agents, the manuscripts having been completed between January and April, 1960. The information for inclusion in each chapter has been chosen with rare discrimination, based on each author's familiarity with his subject, and although the book is the work of several authors, its style is uniformly lucid and interesting, making it a delight to read. In their preface, the editors state that this "collection of reviews is written for the chemist, biochemist, pharmacologist, and to a smaller extent, the clinician." Although, therefore, not intended primarily for the clinician, the practitioner can read the book with much profit, for it is a guide to his understanding of the principles and procedures involved in product development by the pharmaceutical industry and by university laboratories, thus affording him a better perspective on which his choice of drugs may be based.

Each chapter has an excellent bibliography.

CLINTON H. THIENES, M.D.

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FINANCING MEDICAL CARE—An Appraisal of Foreign Programs— Edited by Helmut Schoeck. Current commentaries on medical care systems in seven foreign countries written by economists, actuaries, political analysts, physicians, professors of medicine, and statesmen. The Caxton Printers, Inc., Caldwell, Idaho, 1962. 314 pages, \$5.50.

One need not go beyond the borders of our northern neighbor—Canada—to witness the pressures being exerted by local and national governments on this continent to enact compulsory health insurance for various segments, or whole sections, of the population. In the United States, as in provinces of Canada, the widespread enrollment under voluntary health insurance and the variety of measures adopted by agencies on all levels of government to provide for the health needs of the indigent have failed to deter legislative proposals for one form or another of State or Federal health insurance. (As this review is written, Saskatchewan's compulsory health insurance program has just gone into effect.) Not infrequently, the experiences of European countries are cited as examples of the "backwardness" of America in this arena of controversy which has become the most explosive social and political issue of the day. With the publication of this collection of articles, Professor Schoeck has brought together in one reference source descriptions of health insurance systems in seven European countries. In so doing, he has had the assistance of economists, political analysts, administrators, physicians, and other experts who have had intimate experience with the programs in their own countries. The book lives up to its promise of *not* being impartial; for the editor and the contributors share a common belief in individual and voluntary efforts which are the very antithesis of the philosophy underlying "state medicine."

This volume will serve as a timely reference for all those who have supported the medical profession's opposition to Forand-King-Anderson—and variations yet to come. It will be an aid to physicians who frequently have been confronted with facts for which they lacked information to evaluate. It will undoubtedly have a sobering effect upon those protagonists who equate medicine's opposition purely with "selfish" motives. Above all, it presents in simple and con-

cise language the background, origin, and present stage of development of seven programs, some of the problems they have attempted to resolve, and those which they have created.

Although the systems of health care in Austria, Australia, Germany, Great Britain, France, Sweden, and Switzerland vary with respect to their causes, objectives, and scope and extent of coverage, they reveal the different forms which centralized government can utilize. They portray the effects of different philosophies at different periods in the history of each country. The reader will find the article on "Medical Care for Youth . . ." in West Germany particularly intriguing in the light of the controversy over medical care for the aged in the United States. The article on the development of compulsory health insurance in Sweden is probably the most illuminating and well-written of all since it contains data and information which lend support to the author's arguments. It is unfortunate that some of the other articles lack comparable statistics, but their conviction of purpose and the insights they provide compensate in some measure for this shortcoming.

The volume concludes with two articles which describe the National Health Service in Australia, a system of voluntary-oriented health insurance which has been described by Sir Earle Page in other medical periodicals. It is one which the medical profession in Australia actively endorses and supports, and one which undoubtedly would have considerable appeal to the majority of physicians in this country who are faced with the alternatives before them. It is certainly the envy of the medical profession in Great Britain.

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DRUG THERAPY—Frank C. Ferguson, Jr., M.D., Professor of Pharmacology and Chairman of the Department of Pharmacology, the Albany Medical College of Union University, Albany, New York. Lea & Febiger, Washington Square, Philadelphia 6, Pa., 1962. 411 pages, \$7.50.

This book is a compendium of the author's personal opinions about drugs and their clinical use. He has provided a list of the compounds which he considers most efficient and least toxic and expensive, in variety sufficient to cover all therapeutic needs. He has usually discussed more than one compound in a class but has avoided duplication as much as possible. When several drugs (which he considers of equal value) exist, he has made a choice on the basis of the manufacturer, favoring products of the companies with the best practices.

Doctor Ferguson has included some 50 chapters in Drug Therapy, listed in ten general groups of drugs, such as anesthetic agents, anti-infective agents, compounds for the cardiovascular system, for the central nervous system, and for the endocrine system. Most chapters begin with general notes describing features of activity, toxicity and metabolism. Under "choice of drugs" are listed the ways in which agents differ. Under "clinical usage" indications for use and principles of dosage are described. Finally, specific drugs are listed under generic names with representative trade names for reference.

Since this is a small book, the author has excluded all material not directly pertinent to clinical therapy. Relations of chemical structure to activity have been excluded. Phonetic spelling and abbreviations are frequently used. No references are given.

The reviewer finds Drug Therapy a volume which can be very helpful and furnish valuable guidance to the practicing physician, house officer, and student. It is, of necessity, incomplete and may well produce cries of anguish from manufacturers whose products are not listed. It is recommended as a practical guide for the office desk or the medical bag.

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